Observance of 1999 as 'Visit India Year'

2010. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that year 1999 is proposed to be observed as Visit India Year";

(b) if so, whether any package of incentives is proposed to be offered to boost the growth of tourism;

(c) if answer to Part (b) be in the affirmative, the details thereof and if in the negative, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government are aware of the difficulties of the tourists due to non-acceptance of credit card in some tourist destinations; and

(e) if so, the steps proposed to remove this bottleneck?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) Ist April, 1999 to 31st March 2000 is proposed to be observed as Visit India Year.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Ministry of Tourism with the help of Travel Trade and the State Govenments is proposing to offer special packages and incentives through the following activities:

—Special theme packages

—Promotion of selected Fairs and Festivals

—Shopping and Food Festival

—Tourism Expos

—Special Celebrations for the Millennium

—Special Cultural events

(d) and (e) No, Sir.

Drop in Foreign Tourist

2011. SHRI KUSHOK THIKSEY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is 40 per cent drop in the number of foreign tourists visiting the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken to revamp the tourism industry in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) and (b) There has been a marginal decline of 0.6 per cent in tourist arrivals during the period from January-November 1998 as compared to the corresponding period of the previous year. The decline has been primarily due to economic crisis in South East Asian countries, general elections in India, high room tariffs in metro cities, etc.

(c) Tourism industry is eligible for various incentives and the units with foreign exchange earning of Rs. 6 crores and above has been now accorded export house status.

Development of Tourism in Himachal Pradesh

2012. SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have accorded the status of Industry to Tourism;

(b) if so, the details thereof with details of relevant instructions;

(c) whether Government propose to ask the Government of Himachal Pradesh to identify new sources of tourism in the State and prepare a comprehensive programme in this regard to attract foreign and domestice tourists in the State: